

Dear Board of Health Montgomery Council,

Please accept my written testimony regarding the COVID vaccine mandate. Not only do I find this mandate incredibly frightful and oppressive against personal choice, discriminating against those of us who also wish to see the end of the pandemic and would do almost anything possible to achieve that, but it also lacks significant consideration of the reality of the effectiveness of the current vaccines, what is actually happening within our communities, the benefits of the current treatments and a complete denial of natural immunity.

I am a very healthy and health conscious individual in our community. I am cautious in my approach to any medical treatment since I have suffered from medical side effects and have always ended up having to be my own health advocate. Over the years, I have learned the hard way that my personal health is my responsibility.

I am by no means anti-vaccination. I have all of the adult vaccines, and many more obscure ones from my travels. However, when the pandemic hit and when the new untested emergency vaccines were released, I consciously weighed all of my personal risk factors and the any risks I may pose to my family and the community and decided I did not want the covid vaccine. I acquired covid in Dec 2021 and it was quick and relatively uneventful for me and my eldest child who had even milder symptoms. My youngest child did not get any symptoms at all despite being exposed to both of us for over two weeks.

Since then, everyone I know, vaccinated or not, has had covid. The general feeling amongst people I know is that the vaccine is no longer as effective. I know several people who will not get a booster and since they received their vaccinations many months ago now, the effectiveness has waned significantly, if not completely.

There is no logic in a vaccine mandate when the vaccine immunity is already gone for so many people. There is also no logic to blatantly discrimination against those of us who currently have natural immunity. Only a few of us will speak up against the mandate, but I suspect the reality of how many people are against it will hit our communities when people are no longer free to enter public areas. Such an idea is deeply disturbing, especially to people like me, who love to be a part of the community through volunteering and also take health very seriously, virtually staying out of the healthcare system, and is suddenly no longer welcome in the general public and considered some kind of public health threat, even though I am exceedingly healthy and currently immune.

The covid treatments and landscapes are continuously changing. Fewer people are dying. There are so many other ways to treat covid. Vaccines are not a one size fits all solution. A mandate at this time is overreaching and will create even larger rifts in our community passing the responsibility back onto business owners and low wage workers to enforce an inherently discriminating policy. People will turn even more against each other.

At this time, I believe it is most prudent to allow people to make the best choices for themselves and allow our community to heal from the trauma of the past two years. Imposing further restrictions will fuel the current hatred that exists. I urge you please to not enforce any more mandates and let this wave of the pandemic ride out patiently. We are slowly all getting through this together.

Sincerely,
Maya Tinker